item which appeared in the Indian Post dated 24th June, 1988 under the caption "Doctors cashing in on AIDS scare"; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and steps proposed to be taken to check such practices by the doctors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) Government has seen the news-item appeared in 'Indian Post' dated 24-6-1988.

(b) Government of India in collaboration with ICMR and State health authorities, have established a nation-wide network of Reference|Surveillance centres for performing serological screening for HIV antibodies among high risk groups and persons with symptoms and signs suggestive of HIV infection. These centres perform the tests without any charge.

Irregularities in Commission Scheme for Sales agents of Air India

1946. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the serious irregularities in Air India Commission Scheme for its general sales agents;

(b) whether it is a fact that this scheme was beset with dubious deals; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken by Government to remove such irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA): (a) to (c) Appointment of General Sales Agents by airlines is an industrial practice which Air India also follows. It is not correct to say that appointment of GSA by Air India is beset with dubious deals. At times there are differences due to the interpretation of the clauses of the Agreement. Air India follows the laid down procedure both for approving the necessity of appointing and for the selection of GSAs. In the air transport market which is highly competitive, other airlines resort to various schemes to attract traffic and Air India also has to appoint GSAs to retain its share of the market. There was a case of the GSA of Air India in London viz. M/s. Hindustan Travel Services where certain guidelines regarding the payment of incentive commission was misconstrued. This matter was investigated in detail and the General Sales Agreement with M/s. Hindustan Travel Services was terminated with effect from 30th April, 1986. Subsequently, Air India appointed M/s. Gimvale Ltd., trading as Welcome Travels, as the new GSA in London with effect from November 1986.

Exclusion of Iron preparation from Price Control Order

1917. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEPTULLA:
DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 4 given in the Rajya Sabha on 27th July, 1988 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Iron Tablets are used for Maternal and Child Health Programme;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry are purchasing Iron Tablets and other Iron preparations for free distribution under this programme;

(c) if so, what was the amount spent for purchase of these medicines during last three years year-wise alongwith the quantity of Iron preparations purchased during last three years, year-wise in different forms;

(d) what was the quantity distributed freely under this programme during last three years, year-wise;

(e) what is the percentage of pregnant women and children suffering from Iron deficiency;

(f) names of other drugs used for Maternal and Child Health Programme and the number of them are freely distributed; and

(g) what is the criteria under which Government excluded Iron preparations for recommendation under price control?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Sanction order for expenditure for procurement of different forms of Iron preparation during last three years alongwith the quantity is in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix CXLVII, Annexure No. 78].

(d) The quantity distributed free under the programme during last three years is in Annexure. [*See* Appendix CXLVII, Annexure No. 79].

(e) Country-wide precise estimate of percentage of pregnant women and children suffering from Iron deficiency is not available.

(f) The other drug used under Maternal and Child Health Programme is Vit. 'A' under the scheme of prophylaxis against blindness due to Vit. 'A' deficiency. This is distributed free.

(g) The drugs are now being evaluated for price control recommendations to the Deptt. of Chemicals.

Free distribution of Vitamin A under National Health Programme

1948. DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 4 given in the Rajya Sabha on 27th July, 1988 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Vitamin A is used for control of blindness;

(b) whether it is also fact that Vitamin A in different forms is used commonly for control of blindness;

(c) whether it is also a fact that more than 95 per cent of Vitamin A is used in different forms for the control of this disease;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government are distributing free Vitamin A in finished form under National Health Programme; and

(e) if so, what was the quantity of Vitamin A purchased by Government in different forms during last three years, year-wise for free distribution under the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Under the scheme of prophylaxis against blindness due to Vit. 'A' deficiency concentrated solution of synthetic Vit. 'A' in arachis oil containing one lakh international unit in 1 ml. is used.

(c) Government do not have precise information on this.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The quantity of Vit. 'A' purchased during the last 3 years are as follows:—

1985-86—14.00 lakhs bottles containing 50 doses per bottle.

1986-87—10.50 lakh bottles containing 50 doses per bottle.

1987-88—9.7 lakh bottles containing 50 doses per bottle.